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Express Mail Receipt No. EV 478559819 US
Name: James J. Dade
Signature: [Signature]
Date: May 5, 2006

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : Koichiro Hirao
Serial No. : 10/619,679
Filed : July 14, 2003
Title : IMAGE ENCODING APPARATUS, IMAGE . . .

May 5, 2006

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

S I R:

In order to comply with discretionary regulations 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and copies of the non-US documents (if any) listed thereon. These documents contain information which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

For documents written in a language other than English, English language abstracts and/or explanations are annexed thereto explaining the relevancy in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3).

Also attached is a Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006, from the corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217. All of the documents listed in Form PTO-1449 appear in the Japanese Office Action.

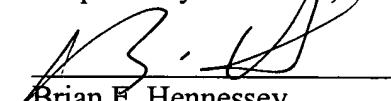
The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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DOCKET NO.: NECL 20,514



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1449/PTO	U.S. Department of Commerce Patent and Trademark Office	Application No. : 10/619,679
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT		Filing Date : 07/14/2003
<u>Sheet 1 of 1</u>		First Named Inventor: Koichiro Hirao
		Group Art Unit : 2621
		Examiner Name :
		Attorney Docket No. : NECL 20.514

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials	Cite No. ¹	U.S. Patent Document	Kind Code if known ²	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YYYY	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear

FOREIGN DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials	Cite No. ¹	Foreign Patent Document Office ³ Number ⁴ Kind Code ⁵ (if known)	Country	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD- YY/Y	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		05-328136	JP	OKI ELECTRIC IND CO LTD	12-10-1993	*, **
		11-055531	JP	RICOH CO LTD	02-26-1999	*, **

*Mentioned in Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006 for corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217

** English language abstracts provided

Other Prior Art-Non Patent Literature Documents

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), data, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, country, where published, source.	Applicant check here if English language translation attached
		Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006 for corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217	X (partial)
Examiner Signature		Date Considered	

Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw a line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹Unique citation designation number. ²See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. ³Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.1¹ if possible. ⁶Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached. Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.